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539 When he came back, he saw the snake in its place. Then he changed back into a human being. The fiber bag was there, too. The bananas were there, too. The snake filled with water (that is, underdone, still watery) was there.

It was afternoon when he went into his house. The bag he brought to his wife. He came to his wife with this bag. When he had knocked, he entered.

2. Orientation and General Knowledge

772 776 177 Nothing definite can be said about the ancient Paez conception of the world, since Christian influence has had a strongly modifying effect. In any case, there is in the Paez vocabulary the word "tátyinas," which is sometimes translated as "god," and sometimes -- and corresponding better with the meaning of the word -- as "creator." The word "Dios" is used to designate the Christian God. Tátyinas, I was told, lives in heaven, on the earth, and in the earth. He made all human beings. He does not receive sacrifices. He is not mentioned in shamanistic ceremonies.

772 775 The vocabulary shows that, besides the earth and the conception of a heaven or of the firmament, there were also two places of the dead that were familiar. The happy land of death, mbéka kígwe, is like heaven. Literally it means "land of chicha," and if one knows the Paez, one realizes that in any case it must be /254/ a happy land. The land of the dead corresponding to [776] "hell" is called eč kígwe. The eč are the most evil of all spirits. They live in the earth; hence this designation must refer to a subterranean land.

804 461 As for natural periods of time, only days and months are known, as well as work days and non-work days (ki'sen). The latter designation is now used for Sunday. Originally this was not a fixed day; rather, people worked and celebrated as they could arrange the time within a larger or smaller community. Even today, during the times of clearing, the people sometimes work for weeks in the field, without inserting a work-free day.

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25. The Sky

Informant: Agustín Muse.
Interpreter: Marco Antonio Penkue.

Once when I was near death my soul climbed to the sky, which is a flat plain where the view extends to the horizon. The entrance is wooded. The Virgin told me that this land was for her sons and that I would have a piece. To reach the sky, one first goes along a good path and soon becomes lost; the most hidden one leads to the Virgin's palace. It is said that it is bad for one to eat the porcupine, because he will come before María Santísima dressed in its skin. He will go to the devil, and although the latter cannot pick him up, he has hooks with which to grab him. This is why, at the hour of retiring or rising, I pray to my God and to María.

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The palace of María is of blinding splendor. It is very beautiful. The Virgin always holds the Child; only rarely does she put him down somewhere.

I tell my fellow men what I saw but they make fun of my account.

/308/ It is holy, they should respect it.

Good people go to heaven, that is to say, those who do not abuse other persons, say evil things, or are loutish.

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26. Origin of the Plants

The old people said that every kind of seed had been given by María Santísima, who drew them from her womb and gave them to the Christians in order for them to maintain themselves. Plants are thus inherited from María Santísima. She gave away every kind of seed when her brother was around. Hence his rage, since he wanted to give seeds and animals and could not. Perhaps the snakes were made by Santo Tomás. /The bibliography on p. 309 is omitted in the translation; see the foreign text./

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